

ASOR Publications Committee (COP) Agenda
Kevin McGeough, Presiding
Thursday, November 16, 2023
8:30–10:30 am, Hilton Chicago
Minutes taken by Marta Ostovich

Present: Gary Arbino, Andrea Berlin, Stephanie Budin, Bill Caraher, Simeon Chavel, Susan Cohen, Jennie Ebeling, Sharon Herbert, Chuck Jones Eric Kansa, Kevin McGeough, Jacob Lauinger, Piotr Michalowski, Jana Myranova, Jessica Nitschke, Andy Vaughn,

Guest: Marta Ostovich

1. Call to Order and Introductions
2. Approval of Minutes of 2022 Meetings

Gary moved. Andrea seconded. Minutes approved.

3. Approval of Agenda

Andrea moved. Piotr seconded. Agenda approved.

4. Acceptance of Reports of Chair and Editors

Items for Discussion and Possible Action

1. Welcome to Simeon Chavel and *Ma'arav*.
2. Recognition of Piotr Michalowski's 32 years of service as *JCS* editor.
3. Report from University of Chicago Press.
Subscriptions are increasing. ASOR's contract is up in 2024, and we hope to continue with UCP.

There was discussion of foreign-language article summaries and open access.

4. Nominations to fill class of 2026.
Jeff Howry is staying on. Mara Horowitz is cycling off at the end of her second term. Kevin asked for recommendations on new members. Stephanie recommended Allison Gruseke, formerly on NEA Editorial Board. **Open call for new COP members to be posted.**

5. Discussion of issues related to image rights.

There are issues with *ANE Today*. and blog posts regarding copyright claims, reverse image searches, etc. Jessica stated that everything from 2022 and earlier has been taken down to sort through images and remove those that are questionable and non-essential. The creation of an *ANE Today* author agreement might help, but still does not fully protect ASOR.

6. Discussion of the need for a dedicated website for *ANE Today*.

ANE Today is hard to find on the ASOR website, which makes it hard to grow. Jessica suggested that a dedicated website would help with analytics, and make it more visible, stream-lined, and efficient. Visitors could register to read article, thereby growing FOA.

7. Discussion of ASOR office issues related to publications.

Kevin mentions monograph editors are concerned about reviewers not getting copies, issues with international shipping. **COP moves to compensate book reviewers by shipping the volume under review, be it within the US or internationally. Andrea moved. Simi seconded. Approved.**

Susan brought up possibly stopping book reviews in *BASOR* because of issues with international shipping. Marta will check whether ISD maintains a list of journals that do book reviews.

There was discussion of the need for better communication between editors and the office and an ASOR staff person dedicated to social media.

There was general consensus that more office support is needed, particularly in regard to promotion/marketing and in stream-lining channels of communication and processes.

8. Discussion of proposal for funding for supporting the Non-English Language Abstract Initiative. (see appendix 1)

Kevin stated need to figure out cost on how to hire people. Money that was allocated was not enough (\$500 annually). Discussion on translating abstracts and needing different languages for different articles. Andrea suggested editing a Google Translate/other translation. Stephanie suggested using graduate students (offer money + membership). Marwan recommended using two people to double-check. Susan asked how to test this and see if this increases downloads? Is there demand? Kevin noted request from part of DEI Initiative, to increase outreach and market. Gary suggested professional translation prizes (\$0.14/word). Drawing from ASOR membership did not work aside from Hanan who did it pro bono. Eric brought up working with ACOR, CAARI, and AIAR. Piotr brought up journal Iraq – consult them for Arabic. Marwan noted easier to hire if all journals were doing this. Kevin suggested request for \$2,000 to board, option of ASOR membership. 32 articles per year.

COP agreed to request \$2,000 in funds with the option of ASOR membership to support abstract translation in *NEA*.

9. Discussion of process for renewing editorships.

Kevin stated a need to formalize process; solicit feedback from office, UCP, leadership, committee chairs. Simi could use more criteria for feedback. Chuck brought up past issue of abuse-privacy/personnel issue. **Renewal of BASOR Editors contract has been sent to the EC and Board for approval.**

10. Monographs issues (page counts, subventions and funding issues).

Kevin noted contracts have word counts. We don't want to limit authors, but also want editors to have some control. Page count/word count should be up to the editors. Bill is working on language; we can encourage 'reasonable-length', but would be nice if COP could mandate it. Sharon brought up issues of lawsuits if we try to enforce; unenforceable.

Discussion of supplemental materials.

COP empowers monograph editors to work with authors to establish reasonable lengths for their volumes. Jennie moved. Bill seconded. Approved.

Bill brought up book subventions. ARS requires \$5K, but AASOR does not. There is a need for a clearer understanding of subvention and cost. Are subvention costs too low or prohibitive for authors? Kevin mentioned moving to print-on-demand model. AASOR doesn't have subvention because of subscriptions. **Data needed on subventions and subscriptions.**

11. Issues related to digital publications.

Kevin has not heard from CAP. He would like to present to CCC for their feedback/approval. Susan mentioned that new people have not seen the policy. **Kevin will circulate the digital publication policy to COP, before presenting it to the CCC in March.**

12. New Business or issues arising from the floor.

Kevin reported on interviewing candidates for *JCS* Editor. They're hoping to make a decision Friday night/Saturday morning.

Adjournment at 10:30 am.

Appendix 1

Proposal for assistance in supporting the Non-English Language Abstract Initiative

The Publications Committee is writing to request financial support from ASOR to support the Non-English Language Abstract Initiative for our journals. At this stage, we are requesting funding to pilot this work with *Near Eastern Archaeology*. Should the venture be feasible, we may wish to consider expanding the program to our other journals.

The idea for including Non-English abstracts with our publications emerged from a session in the 2021 Annual Meeting. During that session, various reasons regarding why such abstracts are important were compiled and delivered to COP. This was presented to COP, and the committee unanimously agreed that abstracts in the language of the country in which work was conducted should be included with ASOR publications related to that work. This fits well within ASOR's

mandate of increasing internationalization, inclusivity, and accessibility of scholarship beyond North America and Europe.

In 2022, we attempted to pilot this project with *NEA*. The editor of *NEA*, Stephanie Budin, worked with UCP on the internal infrastructure for Non-English abstracts for *NEA*, determining how to submit a secondary/tertiary abstract and where such abstracts would appear in the digital version. Working through previous issues of the journal, Stephanie identified the following languages as those most often needed: Arabic, Farsi, Greek, Hebrew, and Turkish.

Andy Vaughn was able to identify a small amount of funds to support this work but not enough to hire translators. It was determined that we should first see if authors were able to find individuals to translate their abstracts themselves, although the concern was raised that we would need someone internal to ASOR to be able to check what was written in these abstracts, someone familiar enough with the language to identify potential problems (such as controversial names for places, etc.) Stephanie put out a call for volunteer translators, but she received no responses (although Hanan Charaf through COP noted that she could do this work for Arabic). After discussing the matter with various authors, Stephanie determined that our submitters lacked the capacity to provide this and so halted the initiative.

In the 2022 COP meeting at the ASOR Annual Meeting, COP unanimously recommended that the initiative be resumed and that funding should be directed towards its support. In short, we

ask that ASOR hire individuals with the capacity to translate abstracts into the languages listed above.